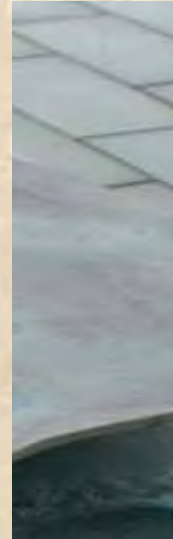


REPORT TO THE CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



2009

U. S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad



This bronze model of the Mittlebau-Dora concentration camp stands at the entrance to the museum at the camp site. The model, a Commission-funded project, was dedicated in April 2005.

“ HAVING SURVIVED, I OWE SOMETHING TO THE DEAD AND ANYONE WHO DOES NOT  
REMEMBER, BETRAYS THEM AGAIN.” Elie Wiesel





Broken gravestones at the Jewish cemetery in Kamjanka-Buzka, Ukraine. The Commission conducted a survey of Jewish cemeteries, synagogues, and mass graves in Ukraine that it published in 2005. Photo: Sue Talansky August, 1997.

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The Commission donated this bronze sculpture to the Buchenwald concentration camp Museum in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the camp's liberation. Sculptor Walter Spitzer, who survived Buchenwald, titled the piece, "Muselmann," which was the term used by prisoners in the camps to refer to fellow inmates on the verge of death from starvation, exhaustion, and despair.

## OUR MISSION AND MEMBERS

The Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad was established by U.S. Public Law 99-83, signed by President Reagan on August 8, 1985. The purpose of the Commission is to help preserve and protect cemeteries, monuments, and historic buildings in Central and Eastern Europe associated with the foreign heritage of United States citizens.

### **The duties of the Commission include:**

- Identifying and reporting on cemeteries, monuments, and historic buildings associated with the heritage of United States citizens, especially properties in danger of deterioration or destruction;
- Obtaining assurances from the governments of the region regarding the preservation and protection of these cultural properties; and
- Encouraging and facilitating restoration of sites with private and foreign government funding.

### **Commission Members**

The Commission consists of 21 members appointed by the President of the United States. Of these, seven are appointed after consultation with the Speaker of the House of Representatives and seven are appointed after consultation with the President Pro Tempore of the Senate. The President of the United States designates a chairman from among the members. Members are appointed for three-year terms but continue to serve until they are replaced. They are not paid for their service.

#### **Chairman**

Hon. Warren L. Miller, McLean, VA

#### **Members**

Hon. Linda A. Addison, Houston, TX	Hon. Rachmiel Liberman, Brookline, MA
Hon. Ned W. Bandler, Bridgewater, CT	Hon. Harley Lippman, New York, NY
Hon. Ronald H. Bloom, Beverly Hills, CA	Hon. Michael A. Menis, Inverness, IL
Hon. William C. Daroff, Potomac, MD	Hon. Jonathan J. Rikoon, Far Rockaway, NY
Hon. Tyrone C. Fahner, Evanston, IL	Hon. Harriet Rotter, Bingham Farms, MI
Hon. Jules Fleischer, Brooklyn, NY	Hon. Lee R. Seeman, Great Neck, NY
Hon. Martin B. Gold, Washington, DC	Hon. Lawrence E. Steinberg, Dallas, TX
Hon. Peter Hawryluk, Zionsville, IN	Hon. Irving Stolberg, New Haven, CT
Hon. Andrew M. Klein, Bethesda, MD	Hon. Robert Zarnegin, Beverly Hills, CA
Hon. Michael B. Levy, Washington, DC	



A key accomplishment of the Commission is the negotiation of agreements between the Government of the United States and the governments of other countries. These agreements commit the signatories to protect endangered sites and to assure that there is no discrimination against the sites of any minority group.

COUNTRY:	DATE OF SIGNING:	SIGNED BY:	PLACE
Italy	December 18, 2008	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Italy's Cultural Assets Minister, Sandro Bondi, with Deputy Prime Minister Gianni Letta, Council of Ministers Secretary General Mauro Massi, and U.S. Ambassador Ronald Spogli witnessing	Rome
Montenegro	October 16, 2008	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Montenegro's Culture Minister, Branislav Micunovic, with Undersecretary of State James K. Glassman and Montenegrin Ambassador Miodrag Vlahovic witnessing	Washington
Georgia	July 28, 2008	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Ambassador Vasil Sikharulidze with Deputy Secretary of State John D. Negroponte witnessing	Washington
Croatia	February 9, 2005	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Croatia's Culture Minister, Bozo Biskupic, with Croatia Parliament Member Mario Zubovic, Croatian Ambassador Neven Jurica, Commission Member Gary J. Lavine, and Special Envoy for Holocaust Affairs Edward O'Donnell witnessing	Washington
Serbia and Montenegro	September 24, 2004	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Foreign Minister Vuk Draskovic with Commission Members Chaskel Besser and Lee Seeman and Serbia and Montenegro Ambassadors to the U.S., Ivan Vujacic, and the U.N., Nebojsa Kaluderovic, witnessing	New York
Albania	July 12, 2004	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Foreign Minister Kastriot Islami with National Security Council Senior Director Daniel Fried and Albanian Ambassador Fatos Tarifa witnessing	Washington
Armenia	May 25, 2004	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Ambassador Arman Kirakossian with Under Secretary of State Marc Grossman witnessing	Washington
Poland	May 11, 2004	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Ambassador Przemyslaw Grudziski with Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage witnessing	Washington
Hungary	April 15, 2004	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Culture Minister Istvan Hiller with U.S. Ambassador George Herbert Walker witnessing	Budapest
Austria	April 13, 2004	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Deputy Secretary General for Foreign Affairs Hans Winkler	Vienna



Polish Ambassador Przemyslaw Grudzinski and Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller shake hands after signing the agreement between the United States and Poland in the Indian Treaty Room at the White House. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, center, witnessed the 2004 agreement.

COUNTRY:	DATE OF SIGNING:	SIGNED BY:	PLACE
Germany	May 19, 2003	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger	Washington
Czech Republic	March 3, 2003	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Deputy Foreign Minister Pavel Vosalik	Exchange of Documents
Estonia	January 16, 2003	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Culture Minister Margus Allikmaa with U.S. Ambassador Joseph M. DeThomas witnessing	Tallinn
Macedonia	December 10, 2002	Secretary of State Colin L. Powell and Foreign Minister Ilinka Mitreva with Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Macedonian Ambassador Nikola Dimitrov witnessing	Washington
Bulgaria	December 5, 2002	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Ambassador Elena Poptodorova	Washington
Lithuania	October 15, 2002	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Culture Minister Roma Dovydeniene with U.S. Ambassador John Tefft witnessing	Vilnius
Latvia	October 7, 2002	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Culture Minister Karina Petersone with U.S. Ambassador Brian Carlson witnessing	Riga
Bosnia and Herzegovina	July 2, 2002	Commission Chairman Warren L. Miller and Foreign Minister Zlatko Lagumdžija with U.S. Ambassador Clifford Bond witnessing	Sarajevo
Moldova	June 20, 2001	Secretary of State Colin L. Powell and Foreign Minister Nicolae Cernomaz	Washington
Slovak Republic	March 9, 2001	Commission Chairman Michael Lewan and Culture Minister Milan Knazko	Washington
Slovenia	May 8, 1996	Vice President Albert Gore and Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek	Washington
Ukraine	May 4, 1994	Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Foreign Affairs Minister Anatoli Zlenko with Presidents William J. Clinton and Leonid Kravchuk witnessing	Washington
Romania	July 8, 1992	Commission Chairman Arthur Schneier and Foreign Affairs Minister Adrian Nastase	Bucharest
Czech and Slovak Republic	March 17, 1992	Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger and Ambassador Rita Klimova with Commission Chairman Arthur Schneier witnessing	Washington



“ FOR SURVIVORS NOW IN THEIR TWILIGHT YEARS, THESE WERE PLACES WHERE THEY LAST SAW THEIR BROTHERS, SISTERS, PARENTS, AND CHILDREN. AND FOR THE REST OF US, THESE SITES ARE REMINDERS OF THE ENORMOUS CAPACITY FOR EVIL.”

Chairman Warren L. Miller, in the *Forward*, July 6, 2007



**March 2009**

When Congress and President Reagan established the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad in 1985, they could not have envisioned the progress it has made in the ensuing years. We have restored and preserved cemeteries and rebuilt places of worship that were desecrated or deteriorated. We have built and supported memorials at massacre sites throughout Europe. We have resuscitated the memory of communities that disappeared in the death camps.

In order to protect the memory of the Holocaust, we have not only preserved and protected physical sites, we have touched the hearts and minds of hundreds of thousands of Central and Eastern Europeans and citizens of the former Soviet Union. Our work supports museums, educational programs, books, and other active efforts to preserve the past and teach the dangers of ethnic hatred. The Commission has also honored heroes of the Holocaust — the few who had the courage to act when most did not. Through this work, we honor those who were murdered and seek to prevent genocide from ever occurring again.

By maintaining a brisk pace of diplomacy, we have concluded 19 bilateral agreements to preserve America's heritage abroad since I became Chairman in June 2001. Additional agreements are being sought.

Two events exemplify the progress we have made. In early 2008, I was honored to speak at two national Holocaust Remembrance Day events, one in Albania and one in the Czech Republic. Each country had been brutalized by Nazi and, later, Communist rule. Albania, a predominantly Muslim nation, was officially marking the Holocaust for the first time. The overwhelmingly positive response of these two countries to reject hate and remember the past filled me with great hope for the future.

Of course, there is more work to be done. The resurgence of anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial in Europe and the Middle East only reinforces the need to confront and remember what happened during the Holocaust. We must continue to help all nations recognize the importance of pluralism and of fighting intolerance.

The work we do at the Commission is never finished, and in the coming years and decades it will take on even greater urgency. The generation of Holocaust survivors is aging, and soon will no longer be able to share the remarkable stories of their lives and communities before the war. Soon, all we will have as evidence of once thriving populations will be the memorials, the cemeteries, and the synagogues — and the hope that mankind will learn to confront hatred and defend freedom for all.

Warren L. Miller  
Chairman

## PROTECTING HISTORY AND AMERICAN HERITAGE

Among the Commission's responsibilities are the preservation of sites overseas and the funding of memorials for historically meaningful events.

The Commission accomplishes these tasks by raising funds from private donors, working closely with foreign governments, and carefully implementing specific projects, which include educational initiatives.

During the past eight years, the Commission has initiated a wide variety of projects in several nations. Many of the Commission's projects and achievements are highlighted in the following pages.



1

1 - Chairman Warren Miller addressed the Albanian parliament when it inaugurated a national Holocaust Remembrance Day in January 2008.

2 - Chairman Warren Miller and US Ambassador to Albania John Withers meet the family of a Muslim Albanian who rescued Jews during the Nazi occupation of Albania.

## ALBANIA

### Holocaust Remembrance Day

On January 29, 2008, Chairman Miller addressed the parliament of predominantly Muslim Albania in a speech covered live on national television as Albania commemorated its first Holocaust Remembrance Day. Albania's prime minister attended this historic event. Chairman Miller had urged the prime minister and the Albanian ambassador to the U.S. to hold Holocaust commemoration ceremonies. U.S. Ambassador John Withers II played an important role in advancing this proposal.

The country's first Holocaust Remembrance Day garnered the attention of Albanian national media for two days and received international press coverage.



2

Albania has much to be proud of for its conduct during World War II, and yet even the Albanian people did not know this history until recently. When Nazi occupiers demanded a list of Jewish citizens in 1943, Albania's government staunchly refused to provide it. Additionally, hundreds of Jews from Austria, Germany, Greece, Serbia and elsewhere in Yugoslavia fled to Albania and were sheltered by its people. Albania's Jewish population was larger after World War II than before, the only European nation with this distinction.

During an interview on a major Albanian television program, Chairman Miller said "Albania has a long history of secularism, a long history of cultural and religious tolerance. I think this is critical in understanding why they protected their Jewish citizens as well as those who came from other countries to seek refuge."





## ARMENIA

### Armenia Genocide Memorial

In 2006, Commission Member Andrew Klein helped fund a new memorial in Yerevan to pay tribute to the 1.5 million Armenians killed by the Ottomans in the early 20th century and to the Jews killed during the Holocaust. This memorial replaced one damaged by vandalism.

## AUSTRIA

### Feng Shan Ho

In 2008, the Commission posthumously honored Feng Shan Ho (1901-1997), the Chinese Consul-General in Vienna from 1938-1940, with displays around the world. Commission Member Martin Gold led the effort that placed plaques in China and Austria, and exhibits at the Capitol in Washington, DC, and in Shanghai. Gold's initiative led the U.S. Senate to pass a resolution honoring Ho's heroism.

Nazi Germany's annexation of Austria in March 1938 created a reign of terror for Austria's 185,000 Jews, many of whom tried to leave. After the Nazi pogrom of Kristallnacht in November



1938, thousands of Jews were put in concentration camps and only allowed release if a relative produced visas or tickets to travel to other countries. At the time, most countries would not accept Jewish immigrants. Although Ho's superior, China's ambassador in Berlin, forbade him to issue visas on a large scale, Ho ignored the instructions and issued visas to anyone who requested exit documents, even those wishing to travel somewhere other than China. The story of Ho's assistance to the Jews of Austria and Germany reached Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust authority, after his death in 1996. Posthumously, Yad Vashem awarded him the title of Righteous Among the Nations.

## BELARUS

### Dokshitsy Cemetery

In 2007 and 2008, the Commission, in conjunction with a private group, co-sponsored the restoration of this Jewish cemetery in Belarus by accepting donations and transferring the funds to pay for the work.

### Brobruisk Synagogue

In 2005, the Commission convinced the municipality of Brobruisk to let the ruins of a synagogue stand and be maintained by the Jewish community rather than be replaced by a shopping center.

1 - Armenia unveiled this basalt and bronze genocide and Holocaust memorial in October 2006.

2 - In June 2008, Feng Shan Ho's daughter, Manli Ho, met with Commission Member Martin Gold in Washington, D.C. at a photo exhibit honoring her late father.

3 - The Commission restored the pre-burial house at the Sarajevo cemetery, which was destroyed in the 1990s.

4 - Restored interior of the synagogue in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. The Commission sponsored the restoration.



3

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

### Sarajevo Cemetery

At the request of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Commission helped restore the pre-burial building of the Jewish cemetery of Sarajevo.

The cemetery, founded in 1630, is the oldest intact burial ground of any religious group in Sarajevo. Its strategic location overlooking the city made it a center of sniper activity during the 1992-1995 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a result, the cemetery, including its elaborate pre-burial house, sustained significant damage. The area was also heavily mined. The pre-burial house was burned during a siege, destroying much of the original structure and undoing restoration work that had been done only a few years before.

Congress appropriated \$100,000 to the Commission — the only case of government appropriations for a Commission project — to restore the pre-burial house. Matching funds raised by the Commission from private sources were provided by the Sarajevo municipal and regional governments.

The first stage of the restoration of the cemetery consisted of removing the explosive mines that had been planted at the site. The second was restoring the pre-burial house.

## BULGARIA

### Dimitrov Program

Commission Member Ned Bandler has funded a scholarship program at the American University of Bulgaria in honor of former Bulgarian Ambassador Philip Dimitrov. The program recognizes American



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Protestant missionaries for their work in developing the educational and democratic systems of the country. Recently, Bandler agreed to also fund a series of lectures at the university. Bulgaria's former ambassador to the U.S., Elena Poptodarova, will deliver the inaugural lecture.

### Bohlen Scholarship

The American College of Sofia will grant an annual scholarship in honor of former U.S. Ambassador Avis Bohlen, funded by Commission Member Bandler. The American College of Sofia is a highly competitive, high-ranking secondary school in which all students must become fluent in English and another language before graduation. About 95 percent of its graduates go on to colleges and universities, mostly in the United States and Western Europe.

### Plovdiv Synagogue

In 2004, Commission Members Bandler and Michael Levy helped fund the restoration of a synagogue in Plovdiv, Bulgaria's second largest city. It is the only synagogue remaining in Plovdiv.

“Education and a knowledge of history connected with humanity and an ordinary capacity for compassion will perhaps enable us to identify the seeds of old-new dangers and to confine the demons of hatred and evil before they overpower us again.”

Vaclav Havel, then-President, Czech Republic, at the Holocaust Phenomenon Conference, 1999, Prague



## CZECH REPUBLIC

### Terezin's Hidden Synagogue

During World War II, 144,000 Jews were sent to the Theresienstadt ghetto and concentration camp near Prague. The Nazis portrayed it as a “model ghetto” and used it to mislead international delegations regarding the actual conditions of Nazi ghettos and camps. But the reality of life in the Theresienstadt ghetto was grim. Of the Jews interned in the ghetto, 33,000 died and another 88,000 were sent to their deaths in Auschwitz. Only 17,247 survived—among the 15,000 children, only 93 survived. The Terezin memorial hosts many educational and commemorative programs, seeking to educate Czech citizens and foreign visitors on this dark chapter of their history.

When floods ravaged Central Europe in 2002, the town of Terezin sustained extensive damage. One of the buildings affected was Terezin’s “Hidden Synagogue,” which had been discovered only a few years earlier. Jews at Terezin secretly created this synagogue in a storeroom, defying Nazi orders forbidding worship. The walls of the makeshift synagogue were decorated with painted Hebrew liturgical inscriptions and Jewish symbols.



The Commission raised funds to repair the structure and reopen the site to visitors, co-funding the work with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. Former Commission Member Amy Epstein led the funding efforts. She and her husband Bruce made significant contributions, along with Seth Gerszberg and Edie and Walter Loebenberg. The site was dedicated in 2007.

### Cemetery Restorations

The Commission has been assisting the Czech Heritage Action Initiative, (CHAI) headed by Lisa Feder of Illinois, in its efforts to restore Jewish cemeteries in the Czech Republic

## ESTONIA

### Holocaust Markers

In partnership with the British Holocaust Educational Trust, the Commission funded eight memorials throughout Estonia at sites of German forced labor camps. Although some sites of concentration camps and mass graves in Estonia previously had markers put up during the Communist era, those markers merely referred to victims of fascism and intentionally obscured the fact that the victims were predominantly Jewish.

1 - An inscription on the wall of the Theresienstadt ghetto’s “Hidden Synagogue.” It says, “Our eyes should witness your merciful return to Jerusalem.”

2 - One of eight Commission-funded memorials marking the sites of former labor and concentration camps and mass graves in Estonia.

3 - Buchenwald survivor and project architect Stephen B. Jacobs designed this Commission sponsored memorial to the victims of the “Little Camp.”

4 - Letter written by Elie Wiesel to Chairman Miller for the dedication of the “Little Camp” Memorial at Buchenwald.





In addition to raising funds for the project, Commission Member Lee Seeman and then-Commission Member Gary Lavine worked closely with the leaders of the Jewish community and the Government of Estonia to implement it. Five memorials were dedicated on July 25, 2005, with three more planned for completion in late 2009.

## GERMANY

### Little Camp at Buchenwald

"On this site was the infamous 'Little Camp.' Separated by only a barbed wire fence from the Main Camp, its inmates were subjected to the greatest suffering of all those at Buchenwald." So begins the dedication, composed by Then-Commission Member, now Chairman, Warren Miller, inscribed in six languages on the walls of the Little Camp memorial. This memorial was co-developed by Miller in partnership with the Federal Republic of Germany and Germany's Free State of Thuringia. Miller proposed the memorial, raised funds for it, and persuaded Buchenwald survivor Stephen B. Jacobs to design the memorial and donate his architectural services to the project.

Dear Warren -

I so wish I could be with you today and take part in the ceremony in Buchenwald. I am sure it will be a meaningful event; it corrects an injustice. It also brings back memories. April 11 remains with me—but where was I three days later? On a hospital bed, hanging between life and death.

I remember my first return to Buchenwald in the early nineties. The "big camp" seemed intact, clean, silent: a museum. A thick forest of trees replaced the "small camp" where thousands of Jews perished of hunger, disease and cruel violence.

I voiced my anguish as well as my anger to the curators who accompanied me on a "tour" of the camp site.

But then I wanted to be alone.

I leaned against a tree, closed my eyes and looked for my father.

My sick father, tormented and humiliated before my eyes. His feverish whispers. His pain. His helplessness and mine. My father, dying. My father, dead. He entered darkness without leaving a trace.

But he left a scar.

On my whole being.

As ever, yours:

Stephen B. Jacobs

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Inmates of the Little Camp endured some of the most barbaric conditions of any Nazi camp. When General Patton's troops liberated the camp, many of them, though veterans of brutal combat, vomited or sobbed. The liberators were greeted by thousands of prisoners, including 900 children and teenagers.

The memorial was dedicated on April 14, 2002, the 57th anniversary of the liberation of Buchenwald, with more than 1,000 people in attendance

despite cold and heavy rain. A month earlier, a commemoration ceremony was held at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. More than 400 people, including the President's deputy chief of staff, members of Congress, ambassadors from most European countries, and survivors and liberators of the camp were present.



## Sculpture of Buchenwald Inmate

Artist and sculptor Walter Spitzer was just a child when he survived the Buchenwald concentration camp. His bronze sculpture of an inmate of the camp is shown on page 4. In 1994, following a request from the director of the Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora Memorials Foundation for help in funding the Spitzer structure, Then-Commission Member, now Chairman, Warren Miller convinced Holocaust survivor Meyer Zeiffer to fund the sculpture. At the ceremony of the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Buchenwald, Zeiffer donated the sculpture to the Buchenwald Museum.

## Mittelbau-Dora Camp Model

On April 11, 2005, a museum was opened at the site of the Nazis' Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp. The camp was infamous because of the forced labor performed by its 60,000 prisoners. The inmates excavated a tunnel system in the adjacent mountain. Inmates lived in the tunnels for weeks at a time and breathed dangerous dust from repeated dynamiting. Malnourished prisoners worked 12-hour shifts, building V-2 rockets and suffering severe beatings, mental and physical torture, and summary execution for the smallest infraction. The mortality rate by percentage of total inmates was the highest of any concentration camp in Germany.



Those who were too sick or weak to work were shipped to Auschwitz-Birkenau or Mauthausen to be killed.

Then-Commission Member Amy Epstein and her husband Bruce funded a large bronze model of the camp at the museum's entrance. The Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora Memorials Foundation provided matching funds. The Epsteins also participated at the unveiling ceremony.

Chairman Miller spoke at the ceremony dedicating the museum, held on the 60th anniversary of the camp's liberation. He spoke about Harold Welch, of the 104th U.S. Army Infantry Division, one of the liberators of Nordhausen, a sub-camp of Dora. What Welch saw during the liberation had an enormous impact on his life, which he imparted to his children. One of whom, Laura Welch, became Mrs. George W. Bush, the former First Lady of the United States.

## Stuttgart Mass Grave

In 2006, the Commission worked with the German government and others to rebury remains uncovered in a mass grave at a U.S. base near Stuttgart.



## HUNGARY

### Papal Plaques

Plaques honoring Monsignor Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli were dedicated at Budapest's Dohany Street Synagogue complex, the site of Hungary's national Holocaust memorial, on April 15, 2007. The Commission partnered with the Federation of Jewish Communities of Hungary for this project. Commission Member Ronald Bloom donated the money for the bronze plaques and funded several large-screen projections of the dedication ceremony.

Roncalli, who would later become Pope John XXIII, did not ignore the evils taking place in Europe at the time. From his post in Turkey, he issued false papers to save the lives of Jews in Hungary, Slovakia, Croatia, Greece, Romania, France, and Bulgaria.

As Pope John XXIII, Roncalli confronted the elements of anti-Semitism in official church theology and liturgy. His actions led to *Nostra Aetate*, a historic declaration that removed the stigma the Church once attached to the Jewish people, greatly improving relations between the two religions.

The plaques honoring Roncalli were dedicated on Hungary's Holocaust



Remembrance Day. The dedication, at which Chairman Miller spoke, was attended by the prime minister, National Assembly speaker, chief justice of the Supreme Court, and other dignitaries. Approximately 15,000 people participated in a 1.5 mile “March of the Living” ending at the Dohany Street Synagogue complex. This event was especially heartening considering a recent upsurge of anti-Semitism in Hungary.

#### **Gyongyos Cemetery Holocaust Memorial**

The Commission, with funds from Member Ronald Bloom, financed the restoration of the Gyongyos Jewish Cemetery and Holocaust Memorial by the Federation of Jewish Communities of Hungary. The site was rededicated on May 31, 2007. Bloom spoke at the ceremony, along with Hungary’s environment minister.

#### **Gulacs Cemetery**

The Commission, with funds from then Member Amy Epstein and her husband Bruce, paid for a gated fence along the perimeter of the Jewish Cemetery in Gulacs. The project was a joint effort with the Federation of Jewish Communities of Hungary. A bronze plaque is inscribed in English, Hebrew, and Hungarian.

### **ISRAEL**

Commission Member Robert Zarnegin has played an integral part in developing and funding two projects in Israel which reflect the Commission’s values.

#### **Tel Hai Academic College**

At Tel Hai Academic College, Jewish, Arab, Christian, Circassian, and Druze students study side by side, helping to promote cultural tolerance. Zarnegin funded and oversaw the development of a new auditorium building. In addition, Then-Commission Member Betsy Stern and her husband Wally funded a new student lounge in an adjoining building at the college. Tel Hai has diverse educational programs, including biotechnology and a center for learning disabilities. Not only does it serve students from all over Israel, it is the region’s largest employer, driving economic growth in the Upper Galilee.

In recognition of their extraordinary commitment to Tel Hai, Zarnegin and Chairman Miller were both awarded the college’s highest honor.

#### **Second Temple Model**

Zarnegin is funding a large model of the Second Temple in Jerusalem to be dedicated in June 2009. It will be located across from the Western Wall on the roof of the Aish HaTorah building. Hundreds of thousands of people are expected to visit annually, giving them a fuller appreciation of the historical center of Jewish spiritual practice and authority 2000 years ago.

1 - The Commission funded the restoration of the Gyongyos Jewish Cemetery and restored this stone Holocaust memorial.

2 - Former Commission Member Amy Epstein joins German officials to unveil the bronze model of the Mittlebau-Dora Camp in April 2005.

3 - Commission Member Robert Zarnegin led the effort to build a new auditorium and student lounge at Tel Hai Academic College.

4 - Israel’s President, Shimon Peres, and Chairman Warren Miller at the dedication of Tel Hai Academic College’s new campus in 2008 where both spoke.

5 - The Commission is funding the development of a model of the Second Temple to be dedicated in Jerusalem in June 2009.



## ITALY

Many of the heroes of the American Revolution were foreign-born and raised, and fought side-by-side with American colonists against the English. Historians have long recorded with interest the contributions of German, Canadian, French, Italian, and other nationals who fought and died on behalf of the cause of America's liberty.

The sites associated with their lives have interest to a broad swath of Americans today. The Commission was directed by Congress to conduct a preliminary survey of such places, and produced a report identifying 22 important places.

Recently, the Commission worked on a project to remember one of these heroes in his hometown. In 2008, the Commission funded a plaque to commemorate Phillip Mazzei in his birthplace of Poggio-a-Caiano, Italy. The funds for the plaque were provided by Commission Member Tyrone Fahner and the American Society of the Italian Legions of Merit. The project was an initiative of New York State Supreme Court Justice Dominic R. Massaro.



## LATVIA

### Daugavpils Synagogue

One of only two remaining synagogues in Latvia — out of the 230 that existed before the Holocaust — was rededicated on April 11, 2006. At the urging of Chairman Miller, the family of world-renowned artist Mark Rothko funded the restoration of the Daugavpils synagogue. Rothko was born in Daugavpils and lived there as a child. Latvia's President, Vaira Vike-Freiberga, and Commission Chairman Miller spoke at the dedication.

### Rumbula Holocaust Memorial

The Commission co-sponsored and raised funds to complete a memorial to more than 25,000 Jews — most of them women, children, and elderly men — murdered in the Rumbula Forest during two days in late fall 1941. In this small forest, less than 10 kilometers from Latvia's capital, the Jews were forced to strip, run a gauntlet, and then were shot to death.

Originally, the project was a collaborative effort among the Riga City Council, the People's Union of Germany, the Embassy of Israel in Riga, and the Jewish Survivors of Latvia, a



Holocaust survivors' organization led by Steven Springfield of New York. The Commission's sponsorship of the project was proposed by Then-Commission Member Joseph Halfon. Chairman Miller raised the funds for the memorial. Major contributors were Seth Gerszberg and the Estee Lauder Philanthropic Fund. The Albert and Ethel Herzstein Foundation also contributed funds.

The memorial's inscription became an issue when a Riga official proposed language that would have obscured significant Latvian complicity in the massacre. Miller insisted upon a historically accurate inscription. Latvia's President, Vike-Freiberga, personally intervened and promised Miller that the inscription would reflect historic truth.

The memorial was dedicated on November 29, 2002. President Vike-Freiberga, in her speech at the ceremony, called it "a day of mourning for all of Latvia because this crime happened on our soil and our people took part in it." She continued, "It is a sad and black day in the history of Latvia."





## LITHUANIA

### Uzupis Cemetery

In a November 2004 ceremony, the Commission completed a memorial at Uzupis, Lithuania's largest Jewish cemetery, in Vilnius. More than 70,000 people were buried in the cemetery from 1830 through 1948. In 1964, Communist authorities had tombstones removed from the cemetery for use as building material by the government. The memorial incorporates recovered tombstones. Commission Member Harriet Rotter and then Member Steven Some, who led the Commission's contribution efforts, participated in the ceremony with the mayor of Vilnius.

### Snipiskes Cemetery

The Commission has pressed the Government of Lithuania to prohibit construction in Snipiskes Jewish Cemetery, where more than 50,000 Jews are buried. On October 2, 2008,

the United States Senate passed a resolution that commended the Commission's work and said in part: "the Government of Lithuania has allowed construction to take place at the Jewish cemetery...that desecration...is an affront to the international Jewish community, the people of the United States, and everyone who values religious freedom and ethnic diversity around the world."

The U.S. House of Representatives had passed a similar resolution by a vote of 414-1 on November 13, 2007.

## MACEDONIA

### Bitola Cemetery

The southern Macedonian town of Bitola was the center of Jewish culture for the region prior to World War II. Most of its Jews were descended from exiles who came from Spain and Portugal more than 400 years earlier. In 1943, the Nazi-appointed Bulgarian



rulers of the area deported 98 percent of Macedonia's Jewish population to the Treblinka death camp.

Commission Member Michael Menis worked with the Institute for Protection of Cultural Monuments and Museums of Bitola to restore the entrance to the Bitola Jewish Cemetery. The structure at the entrance has been completely restored.

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Macedonia and Menis co-funded the project.

1 - Philip Mazzei miniature, Salvatori Center for Mazzei Studies, Morristown, NJ.

2 - In 2006, the family of Daugavpils-born artist Mark Rothko helped the Commission fund the restoration of the Daugavpils Synagogue.

3 - Latvia's President, Vaira Vike-Freiberga, speaking at the dedication ceremony for the Daugavpils Synagogue.

4 - Attendees at the 2002 dedication of the Commission-funded memorial to Jews murdered in the Rumbula Forest during two days in 1941.

5 - The Commission is funding the restoration of this entrance to the Bitola Jewish Cemetery in Macedonia.



## PROTECTING HISTORY AND AMERICAN HERITAGE

“This memorial will serve as a constant reminder of the terrible events of the Kielce Pogrom, and an eternal tribute to its victims. Today, we memorialize those victims. We also reflect on the positive path taken by the Polish people since that terrible day 60 years ago. And we take to heart why these memorials are critical to the history of all mankind, and to the purpose of all free nations. The events — together known as the Kielce Pogrom — are remembered not only in Jewish history, not only in Polish history, but in the history of all mankind. The pogrom has special significance because of what happened, and because of when it happened.”

Excerpted from a speech by Chairman Warren Miller, at the ceremony dedicating a Commission-funded memorial. Kielce, Poland, July 4, 2006.



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# Pogrom kielecki. 60. rocznica

To była zbrodnia. To była hańba – napisał  
prezydent Lech Kaczyński

ZIEMOWIT NOWAK  
KIELCE

Na obchody 60. rocznicy pogromu Żydów do Kielce przybyli przedstawiciele rządów Polska, Izraela i USA. Przyszło też kilkuset kielczan. Prezydent Kaczyński nie przyjechał. Żydzi z Treblinki wrócili do

o tym w Pawłokonie, powtarzam to  
dzisiaj w Kielcach.  
(Cytatę wystąpienia prezydenta – S. 19)

Warren L. Miller, przewodniczący Komisji ds. Zachowania Dziedzictwa Amerykańskiego za Granicą, przypominał okoliczności pogromu. Przed wojną w Kielcach mieszkało 21 tysięcy Żydów. Większość straciła życie w Treblince. Rok po zakończeniu Holocaustu niechętni wrócili na od-



Wśród ofiar była Regina Fisz i jej trzytygodniowy synek Abramek. Do lasu wywiozł ich milicjant Mazur i trzech innych. Co dziecku po życiu bez matki, po co ma płakać? Na zdjęciu: Regina Fisz i jej syn Abramek. Głównym organizatorem pogromu był Stowarzyszenie Kieleckie. Jego przewodniczącym był Józef Karski. Jego przewoźnikiem był Józef Karski. Jego przewoźnikiem był Józef Karski.

Immediately following dedication of the Commission-funded Kielce Memorial in 2006, one of Poland's largest newspapers ran this article acknowledging that the Kielce Pogrom was a murderous attack by Poles on Jews who had returned to Kielce after surviving the death camps. The headline reads: *On the 60th Anniversary of the Kielce Pogrom, President Lech Kaczynski writes: It was a crime, it was a disgrace.*

## POLAND

### Kielce

On July 4, 2006, the 60th anniversary of the Kielce Pogrom, Chairman Miller delivered remarks at dedication ceremonies attended by Poland's foreign minister and deputy prime minister for a Commission-sponsored memorial to its victims. Remarks of Poland's President Kaczynski, who had taken ill, were delivered by an undersecretary to Kaczynski.

The Kielce Pogrom had great historical significance. Before the Holocaust, 21,000 Jews lived in Kielce. Those who survived the war returned hoping to find loved ones and rebuild their lives. A false rumor that Jews kidnapped a Christian boy ignited a frenzy of hate. More than 40 Jews taking refuge were murdered. Additional killings occurred at other locations around Kielce. The attacks convinced Holocaust survivors throughout Eastern Europe that it was not safe to return to their homes and they should immigrate to Palestine, the U.S., or other countries.

The memorial was built with funds raised by Chairman Miller and with strong support from the mayor and city council of Kielce.

1 - The Commission funded this memorial to the Jews killed in a pogrom in Kielce when they returned to the city following the Holocaust.

2 - This graphic photo of a young woman murdered along with her infant son accompanied the article, illustrating Poland's willingness to face past crimes.

“The work undertaken by Lee and the Commission is extremely important. It provides dignity and respect to those individuals who have passed on. In some areas, such as Serock, where Jews no longer reside, their work shows that Jewish populations once existed prior to the Holocaust.”

US Representative Gary Ackerman regarding the efforts of Commission Member Lee Seeman



## Complete History of Auschwitz

Then-Commission Member, now Chairman, Warren Miller raised funds for a translation from Polish into English of a history of Auschwitz. The Auschwitz Birkenau State Museum requested the translation of the highly acclaimed, five-volume, 1,799-page history of the camp. It is published in three other languages and is considered to be the most authoritative work on the camp.

## Treblinka Visitor's Center

Chairman Miller proposed creating a visitors' center adjacent to the Treblinka death camp site to a senior Polish government official, who agreed. The center would include a permanent exhibit at the site where 850,000 Jews were murdered in less than nine months. Then-Commission Member David Burke raised \$1 million from Michael Vlock and Karen Pritzker for the project. Despite Commission efforts, Polish officials have not moved forward on the project.

## Serock Cemetery

Commission Member Lee Seeman, upon seeing a picture of Jewish gravestones taken from a cemetery in Serock, Poland, vowed to restore this historic site. Headstones in the cemetery date as far back as 1524. Seeman's interest in doing a search



for this cemetery was initially sparked by U.S. Representative Gary Ackerman. In an interview in the Great Neck Record, Congressman Ackerman said, "I am honored that Lee is working on the cemetery located in the town where my mother was born, and all of my grandparents lived." Thirty gravestones taken from the cemetery are being used to build a memorial wall on the cemetery site. A fence around the cemetery will be built and perpetual care will be provided.

## Karczew Cemetery

Before the Commission's involvement, teenagers were inappropriately using the site and dogs were digging up human bones. The site was featured in a National Geographic article about the plight of Jewish cemeteries in Poland. The Commission funded construction of a gated fence and installed a plaque at the entrance. Then-Commission Member Laura Raybin Miller played a key role in this project.





3



4



5

### Identifying Mass Graves

Commission Member Harley Lippman is working with Polish citizen Zbigniew Nizinski to identify and mark mass graves of Jews in Poland. Nizinski has already identified a number of the graves. Funds donated by David Solomon are being used for a documentary film about Nizinski and his work that Lippman is overseeing.

## ROMANIA

### Bucharest Holocaust Memorial

An international outcry erupted in June 2003 when the Government of Romania asserted that the Holocaust had not taken place "within the borders of Romania." Then-President Ion Iliescu also said that "the Holocaust was not unique to the Jewish population of Europe." Among those protesting was Chairman Miller, who had previously proposed to senior Romanian officials that Romania build a national Holocaust memorial in its capital because of its government's complicity in the Holocaust. Iliescu responded to the outcry by establishing a commission to determine the true history. Nobel Peace Prize laureate Elie Wiesel served as chairman. Miller successfully lobbied several Wiesel Commission members to include a memorial as one of their recommendations.

Romania's government accepted the recommendation and budgeted \$5 million for the project. Miller was named to an international panel to select the architect and design for the memorial. It will include an inscription that will acknowledge the Romanian government's complicity in state-sponsored genocide of hundreds of thousands of Jews and Roma during the Holocaust.

Romania's president, Traian Basescu, broke ground for the memorial in 2007. At the ceremony, he admitted that Romanians had long not been told the truth about the Holocaust in their country. The memorial is expected to be completed in 2009.

## RUSSIA

### Bryansk Holocaust Memorial

Commission Member Harriet Rotter is funding a memorial to be built by the Bryansk Jewish community. The project is part of the Russian Jewish Congress' Babi Yars of Russia Memorials Program. The memorial will be a black granite rectangular obelisk on a marble pedestal holding six candles and will be surrounded by a low cast-iron fence.

When the Germans invaded the region in 1941, many Jews had already fled

the Bryansk area due to rumors of the Nazis' arrival. Most of those who remained were imprisoned. On March 2, 1942, a mass execution was carried out. Jews, many naked, were led to an execution site where a pit had been dug. Men were murdered first, shot at the edge of the pit. Then, women, many holding babies and children, were shot. Some children were still alive in the pit, and suffocated under dead bodies. At least 500 men, women, and children were murdered.

1 - The Commission sponsored the translation of this history of the Auschwitz concentration camp from Polish into English.

2 - Tombstones from the Jewish cemetery in Serock, Poland.

3 - These human remains were unearthed at the Jewish cemetery in Grodno, Belarus in 2003.

4 - Commission Member Harriet Rotter met with Chief Rabbi of Moscow Pinchas Goldschmidt and Vice President of the Russian Jewish Congress Darina Privalko. The Commission is funding a Holocaust memorial in Bryansk.

5 - This is a depiction of the interior of the memorial to Romania's Holocaust victims, expected to be completed in 2009.



The Commission has received grants and collected funds to support the restoration of historic Greek Catholic churches in Slovakia. The churches are constructed of wooden logs, and feature religious icons from the 17th century, but are in danger of being lost to the elements and the passage of time.



## SLOVAKIA

### Greek Catholic Wooden Churches

Twenty-eight historic wooden Greek Catholic churches in Slovakia represent an irreplaceable cultural heritage to millions of Slovak-Americans. Constructed of logs, the structures feature religious icons from the 17th century. Yet many of these churches are in danger of being lost to the elements and the passage of time.

In 2002, the Commission, the World Monuments Fund (WMF) and the Samuel H. Kress Foundation of New York funded a survey of the churches. In 2003, the WMF and Kress Foundation funded an international conference to develop a master plan for the repair and maintenance of these churches and four others in Poland. Later, the foundations supported church restorations in Bordruzal and Lukov Venecia. The Slovak Government, the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association of Cleveland, a subsidiary of U.S. Steel Corporation, and private U.S. citizens also contributed. Then-Commission Member and later Ambassador to

Slovakia Vincent Obsitnik led the efforts. Current Commission Member Peter Hawryluk is now raising funds to restore a church in Potoky.

### Trencin Castle

In response to a request from Rudolf Schuster, Slovakia's then-president, Ronald Weiser, the U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia at the time, contributed funds to the Commission to restore lighting at the medieval Trencin Castle, one of the country's most treasured sites.

### Roma Holocaust Memorials

In response to Chairman Miller's proposal to memorialize Roma victimized by the Nazis in World War II, the Slovak government placed memorial plaques in seven different locations around the country.

## UKRAINE

### Berdichiv Cemetery

In the mid-19th century, Berdichiv was home to 50,000 Jews, including a flourishing Hasidic community. Today, fewer than 800 Jews remain. In 2000, the Commission began efforts to restore the town's large

1 - The Commission helped restore the Church of St. Cosmos and Damian.

2 - This interior of a Greek Catholic wooden church showcases folk art and high-quality craftsmanship.

3 -The Commission continues to urge the Ukrainian government to remove the crosses at the Sambor Jewish Cemetery.



2

Jewish cemetery. Until then, private development projects encroached upon the cemetery's boundaries and made maintenance difficult. The Commission received a grant from the Rothschild Foundation, part of which was used to document the historic cemetery's boundaries.

After legal research by Meylakh Sheykhet, Ukraine representative of the Union of Councils for Jews in the Former Soviet Union, the Jewish community of Berdichiv and descendants of Jews from the town cleared excessive vegetation from the site.

### Brody Cemetery

In August 2002, the Commission obtained a grant from the Rothschild Foundation to restore one of two Jewish cemeteries in Brody, once a thriving Jewish community.

A variety of factors have threatened the cemetery. The spread of vegetation, lack of protection, and new construction have led to the removal and toppling of many gravestones.

In February 2003, the Commission contracted with the Union of Councils for Jews in the Former Soviet Union to supervise the cemetery's restoration. Meylakh Sheykhet is overseeing the complicated negotiations with several



3

parties, which has resulted in a public recognition of the cemetery's true boundaries and religious significance.

Clearing vegetation and repairing gravestones, the first phase of the work, was completed in 2007. Now, for the first time in decades, the cemetery's thousands of beautifully carved gravestones are easily visible.

### Sambor Cemetery

The Commission has repeatedly urged senior government officials in Ukraine to help resolve a controversy over the Sambor Jewish Cemetery. The cemetery is all that is left of a Jewish community that existed for more than 500 years. Twelve hundred Jews killed in 1943 by the Nazis are buried in a mass grave at the cemetery. Jack Gardner, a U.S. citizen originally from the area, spent much of his life's savings to restore the cemetery.

However, when the restoration of the Sambor cemetery was mostly complete, a mob erected three large Christian crosses on mounds at the cemetery and threatened anyone who removed the crosses.

Since 2000, the Commission has pressed the Ukrainian government to remove the crosses. Commission Chairman Miller has met with Ukrainian officials up to the country's prime minister to resolve the situation but to no avail.

### SURVEYS

The Commission has published reports on surveys of Jewish sites in Poland, Ukraine, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, and Lithuania, and on sites of Old Believer Christian sites in Lithuania.

Currently, Commission survey reports are being prepared on:

- Jewish Sites in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Jewish Sites in Bulgaria
- Protestant Sites in Bulgaria
- Muslim Sites in Bulgaria
- Jewish Sites in Latvia
- Jewish Sites in Moldova
- Roma Sites in Poland
- Jewish Sites in Romania

Site surveys have also been or are being conducted in Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Serbia, and Montenegro.









## Fighting Intolerance

Over the years, the Commission has broadened its focus beyond preservation of sites and now promotes awareness of the Holocaust and its implications. It confronts foreign governments when they allow historic truth to be denied or minimized. The Commission has worked with countries to establish Holocaust Remembrance Days, create educational projects on the Holocaust and intolerance, and honor those few heroes who stood against evil and protected Jews and other minorities during the Holocaust.

An important component of this effort comes in the form of Chairman Miller's speeches, op-eds, interviews, and other public education efforts around the globe. These activities help others memorialize the past and learn from it, especially in regions where anti-Semitism is on the rise.

In the Middle East, Holocaust denial is frequent and virulent. Iran's President, Mahmoud Ahmadienijad, for example, publicly declared that the brutal and systematic murder of six million Jews was a "myth."

Thus the work of constructing memorials, restoring cemeteries and places of worship, and negotiating of diplomatic agreements with foreign governments has added meaning: It is crucial to remember the past in order to never repeat it.

Five foreign governments have recognized the Commission's work and efforts by bestowing official honors upon Chairman Miller. Additionally, several non-governmental organizations and academic institutions have also recognized the work of the Commission.

These honors, however, pale in comparison to the work done by the Commission in educating the global public to the dangers of ethnic hatred. With each person reached, the Commission is making possible a more hopeful, more tolerant future. The creation of memorials, the preservation of important sites, and speaking out against intolerance, efforts that have accelerated these past few years, offer ample evidence that the Commission's primary objective is being reached.





Rumbula Holocaust Memorial, Latvia.



“WE GATHER HERE TODAY TO NOT ONLY REDEDICATE A SYNAGOGUE AND CELEBRATE THE REJUVENATION OF JEWISH LIFE IN LATVIA, BUT TO REMEMBER AND HONOR THOSE WHO DID NOT SURVIVE. THE MEMORY OF THEIR SUFFERING WILL ALWAYS HAUNT US. THE WORK THAT THE COMMISSION DOES, AND THE HISTORICAL STEPS THAT LATVIA HAS UNDERTAKEN, HELP ENSURE THAT SUCH HORRORS AND INJUSTICE WILL NOT BE REPEATED.”

Excerpted from Chairman Warren Miller's remarks at the rededication ceremony of the synagogue in Daugavpils, Latvia, April 11, 2006



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